

ACCIDENT—SALUTE—TOULON.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

Information of an unfortunate occurrence at Toulon, in firing a national salute in honor of the birthday of the King of the French.

JUNE 19, 1834.

Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

To the House of Representatives of the United States:

I transmit to Congress an extract of a despatch from Mr. Livingston, the minister of the United States at Paris, dated the 7th ultimo, and the copy of a communication made to him by Captain Ballard, commander of the frigate United States, by which it appears that on firing a national salute from that ship, at Toulon, in honor of the birthday of the King of the French, two men were killed and four others wounded on board the French ship of war Suffren. Suitable explanations were immediately made to the French admiral; and the officers and crew of the American frigate, with that generosity which distinguishes their profession, promptly contributed, by a liberal subscription, towards providing for the families of the unfortunate sufferers. I am sure, however, that I should not do justice to the feelings of the American people on this occasion, if I did not invite Congress to assume, on their part, this melancholy duty. I propose, therefore, that the same provision be made, by law, for these French seamen and their families as would be made for American seamen killed or wounded in battle. This proceeding will show the deep sensibility with which the disastrous accident is viewed by the United States, and their readiness to alleviate those consequences which cannot be remedied.

ANDREW JACKSON.

WASHINGTON, 18th June, 1834.

[Gales & Seaton, print.]

Extract of a despatch from Mr. E. Livingston, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in France, to Mr. M^r Lane, Secretary of State of the United States, dated

PARIS, May 7, 1834.

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A most unfortunate occurrence happened at Toulon, as you will see by the copies of letters I have this day received from Captain Ballard, and which I enclose. M. de Rigny apprised me of it on the 2d instant, but the telegraphic despatch which he had received then contained no particulars. I purpose showing Captain Ballard's letter to the King.

Letter of Captain Ballard to Admiral the Baron Freycinet.

U. S. FRIGATE UNITED STATES,

Toulon, May 1, 1834.

SIR: It was with the most profound sorrow that I learned, on my arrival from Marseilles a few moments since, the melancholy accident which attended the firing of the salute by the "United States" this morning in honor of the day.

It is impossible to express what I feel on the occasion: to realize it, my dear sir, you must place yourself for a moment in my situation, and, in so doing, I pray you to accept the strong assurance I confidently give of the deep regret which penetrates the heart of every officer and seaman of the two American ships at Toulon on this subject.

The gunner, whose negligence gave origin to the sad disaster, enjoys the reputation of being a good officer and an amiable man, but he has been for a short time only in his present situation. I have placed him under arrest, and shall bring him before a court martial the moment I meet the commander-in-chief of the squadron of the United States in this sea.

In evidence of the kind feeling and sympathy in this event of those under my command, five thousand francs have been put into my hands by them, with the request that I should place the same immediately at your disposal for the benefit of the families of those who have suffered from the accident.

Allow me, dear sir, to beg of you the favor to discharge this kindness, and believe me to be, with sentiments of the most friendly consideration and perfect respect,

Yours, &c. &c.

To Admiral the Baron FREYCINET,

Prefect of Marine at Toulon, &c. &c.